

Memorandum

TO: Michelle Chan, Project Manager
FROM: Beth Ehsan, Staff Biologist
SUBJECT: Biological Scoping; P08-024
DATE: April 27, 2009

Project Specific Information: The project site is 5 acres and according to GIS records, contains Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub and Dense Coast Live Oak Woodland. The proposed facility includes twelve panel antennas and one parabolic dish mounted on the existing water tank, the installation of four outdoor equipment cabinets enclosed by an eight-foot high chain link fence, and an emergency generator receptacle. The equipment cabinets will require 100 feet of fire clearing and the access road will require 16 feet of fire clearing on each side.

Staff biologist Beth Ehsan visited the site on July 2, 2008 and determined that the primary habitat that will be affected by fire clearing is Diegan Coastal Sage Scrub. Native species observed on-site included red-tailed hawks, wild cucumber, phacelia, laurel sumac, climbing milkweed, poison oak, dudleya, monkeyflower, white nightshade, yucca, white sage, California sagebrush, California brickellbush, buckwheat, and coast live oak. Non-native species were present but not dominant, and included eucalyptus, tree tobacco, wild oats, mustard, and fennel. No California gnatcatchers were observed on-site and none have been observed in the area; therefore, the project site is considered unoccupied by the California gnatcatcher.

Fire clearing is required on-site, according to a letter from Gregg Holdridge of the North County Fire Protection District dated October 8, 2008. Areas within 100 feet of existing homes are considered impact neutral due to existing fire clearing requirements. In addition, new information provided by the applicant indicates that no clearing will occur off-site. The fire clearing will affect coastal sage scrub habitat and therefore will require off-site mitigation with coastal sage scrub habitat at a 2:1 ratio. The area of coastal sage scrub to be impacted by fire clearing, as shown on the attached impact map, is 0.15 acres. Therefore 0.30 acres of coastal sage scrub mitigation will be required as a condition of approval. Mitigation shall be purchased in a County-approved mitigation bank in the Northern Foothills ecoregion.